

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-25

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 OIC-04 AEC-11 OMB-01

ACDA-19 SAB-01 SAM-01 /162 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:EHURWITZ:MBW

APPROVED BY ACTING SECRETARY

NEA/ARN:MDEFORD

EUR/RPM:RHFROWICK

EUR/RPM:JHKING

EUR:JAARMITAGE

S/S -DMILLER

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R 290038Z MAR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CZ, US

SUBJECT: CZECHOSLOVAK AMBASSADOR CALLS ON ACTING SECRETARY

GENEVA FOR SHERER

1. DURING A CALL ON THE ACTING SECRETARY MARCH 27, CZECHOSLOVAK AMBASSADOR SPACIL GAVE A BRIEF, POSITIVE ASSESSMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS AND BROUGHT UP CSCE, MBFR, AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

2. SPACIL SAID THAT HE HAD REQUESTED THE MEETING CHIEFLY IN ORDER TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON BILATERAL RELATIONS PRIOR TO HIS RETURNING TO PRAGUE ON CONSULTATIONS. HIS GOVERNMENT

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FELT THAT RELATIONS WERE DEVELOPING WELL AND THAT MUCH HAD

BEEN ACCOMPLISHED OVER THE PAST YEAR AND A HALF. IT WAS THE GOC'S INTENTION TO CONTINUE THIS TREND. ONE POSSIBLE STEP IN THIS DIRECTION WOULD BE FUTURE HIGH LEVEL VISITS. THE GOC HAD ALREADY INVITED SECRETARIES BRINEGAR AND WEINBERGER AND MAYOR WASHINGTON TO PRAGUE. PERHAPS EVEN A HIGHER LEVEL VISIT MIGHT BE CONSIDERED. SPACIL WONDERED, IN THIS REGARD, IF THE VICE PRESIDENT, WHO WAS A SKI ENTHUSIAST, MIGHT NOT LIKE TO TRY THE SLOPES OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THE QUESTION OF VISITS WAS ALSO RELATED TO THE SIGNING OF THE FINANCIAL AGREEMENT WHEN IT IS FINALLY CONCLUDED. THIS IS A MATTER ABOUT WHICH BOTH SIDES OUGHT TO BE THINKING, HE SAID.

3. THE ACTING SECRETARY AGREED THAT RELATIONS WERE GOING ALONG WELL. WE HOPED FOR A RAPID AND SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION TO THE CURRENT FINANCIAL NEGOTIATIONS IN PRAGUE. THERE WERE, OF COURSE, PROBLEMS STILL TO BE SOLVED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, BUT THEY WERE NOT INSURMOUNTABLE. WITH REGARD TO VISITS, THESE WERE, IN GENERAL, DESIRABLE BOTH AS SYMBOLS OF BETTER RELATIONS AND AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING. THE ACTING SECRETARY WAS UNFAMILIAR, HOWEVER, WITH THE SCHEDULES OF THOSE OFFICIALS WHOM THE AMBASSADOR HAD NAMED.

4. THE ACTING SECRETARY SAID THAT THERE WAS KEEN INTEREST IN THE US OVER THE DIVIDED FAMILIES ISSUE, AND WE HOPED TO HAVE MORE PROGRESS WITH REGARD TO THE LIST OF NAMES GIVEN TO FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK BY SECRETARY ROGERS. TURNING TO MFN, THE ACTING SECRETARY SAID WE UNDERSTOOD GOC CONCERN OVER THIS FACTOR AND WERE NOW SEEKING TO WORK OUT A COMPROMISE IN THE TRADE BILL LANGUAGE WHICH WOULD PERMIT GRANTING OF MFN TO THE USSR AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES.

5. ON CSCE, SPACIL SAID HIS SIDE FELT THAT THERE WAS A SLOW DOWN IN THE TALKS AND THAT SOME NEW IMPETUS WAS NEEDED. HE ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS NOT MORE CONCERN IN THE FRG OVER THE ISSUE OF INVIOABILITY AND PEACEFUL CHANGE OF BORDERS THAN THERE WAS ON THE PART OF THE US. THE ACTING SECRETARY SAID WE FULLY SUPPORTED THE VIEW THAT CSCE SHOULD ALLOW SOME PROVISION FOR THE CHANGING OF BORDERS BY PEACEFUL MEANS. ANOTHER ISSUE TO WHICH WE ATTACHED GREAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IMPORTANCE AT CSCE WAS THE FREER MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE AND IDEAS. IN GENERAL, THE ACTING SECRETARY SAID, THERE WAS AMPLE ROOM TO WORK OUT AGREED POSITIONS ON THE ISSUES BEING DEBATED AT CSCE. WE FELT THE SOVIETS, WHO CAMPAIGNED FOR THE HOLDING OF CSCE, MIGHT TAKE A MORE FLEXIBLE POSITION SO THAT THE CONFERENCE COULD BE BROUGHT TO A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION.

6. ON MBFR, THE ACTING SECRETARY SAID THE MAJOR ISSUE WAS THE REDUCTION OF US AND SOVIET TROOPS STATIONED IN CENTRAL EUROPE. THIS WAS A VITAL FIRST STEP IN THE REDUCTION OF TENSIONS IN THE AREA. REDUCING OR LIMITING THE NUMBERS OF INDIGENOUS TROOPS WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO DISARMAMENT OR PUTTING A CEILING NATIONAL FORCES. THIS WAS AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MATTER AND ONE NOT CONTEMPLATED IN THIS PHASE OF MBFR. IT WAS A QUESTION WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN UP AT A LATER STAGE, BUT IT WAS AN ISSUE WHICH SHOULD FOLLOW A REDUCTION IN FOREIGN TROOPS STATIONED IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

THE US WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE BUSINESS-LIKE ATTITUDE TAKEN BY BOTH SIDES IN MBFR. THE ISSUES WERE COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT, BUT THE FACT THAT WE WERE TALKING WAS IN ITSELF A GOOD SIGN.

7. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, SPACIL ASKED ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR DISENGAGEMENT ALONG THE SYRIAN FRONT. THE ACTING SECRETARY SAID THAT THIS PROBLEM WAS MORE DIFFICULT THAN WAS THE CASE WITH EGYPT BUT THAT IT WAS CLEAR BOTH SIDES WERE INTERESTED IN ACHIEVING DISENGAGEMENT. FOR OUR PART, WE INTENDED TO PRESS FORWARD TO DO WHAT WE COULD UNTIL A FULL PEACE SETTLEMENT WAS ACHIEVED. IF PRELIMINARY TALKS ON SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT WERE SUCCESSFUL, SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD GO TO THE MIDDLE EAST IN THE LATTER PART OF APRIL. WE UNDERSTOOD THAT GREAT DIFFICULTIES LAY AHEAD, BUT AT LEAST ALL PARTIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST NOW REALIZED THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION WAS UNACCEPTABLE. IT MUST BE REMEMBERED, HOWEVER, THAT THE NEXT STEP INVOLVED SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT. THE SYRIANS COULD NOT EXPECT TO GAIN THROUGH THESE TALKS WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE IN A FINAL PEACE SETTLEMENT. KISSINGER

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